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STATINTL**DAVID LAWRENCE**

## In Defense of a Duck Hunter

### Senator Fulbright Is Spoofed for Saying Eisenhower Shot 75 Birds in 3 Hours

Someone in Congress is always taking the joy out of life. Now it's the duck hunting of former President Eisenhower that is being frowned upon by Senator J. William Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas. He told the Senate on Monday that Gen. Eisenhower set a bad example by shooting 40 ducks and 35 other birds in about a three-hour period of hunting in Northern Mexico.

But the Central Intelligence Agency hasn't yet verified the figures, and it is reliably reported that there were no U-2s in the vicinity to determine how many ducks were actually shot down and how many still remain.

But, according to a handy IBM computer, 75 birds of any kind downed in three hours means one every two minutes. It would take a pretty good shot to, average that number, even if birds were plentiful and there were few misses. It is quite possible that there were four or five other members in the Eisenhower party, but this is only rumor and probably it would be a violation of the "bipartisan" spirit of the times even to mention it.

Senator Fulbright said in his speech that Arkansas has placed a limit of one mallard a day on the duck hunters because the decline in the Nation's duck population has become serious. What Mr. Fulbright doesn't know perhaps is that the ducks which fly back and forth from Mexico to the United States and Canada aren't diminished in any appreciable quantity by visiting hunters from the United States.

Fearing that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which Senator Fulbright is chairman, might

possibly start to make an investigation of the subject and thus use up valuable time which could be better employed in finding out what is happening in Cuba, this correspondent decided to make his own investigation of the grave problem that has arisen in the duck world. From a former official of the Eisenhower administration—who, when interviewed, refused to take the Fifth Amendment, although he has been an enthusiastic duck hunter for many years—comes the testimony that in Mexico the so-called "market hunters" operate in groups and, with dozens of guns firing simultaneously, shoot down several hundred ducks every hour, day after day. By comparison, he said, all the visiting hunters from the United States account for a negligible number.

But Congress and the Treasury Department, by putting a crimp in expense-account spending, have managed to reduce the demand from restaurants in this country anyhow, so there isn't any real need to kill so many ducks, after all. It's an ill wind that blows no good.

Certainly, it's a worthy aim to conserve all kinds of wild life in this hemisphere, though it's a little hard to see how anything can be accomplished to restrain the real culprits—the "market hunters" in Mexico—unless some way can be found to resurrect the Monroe Doctrine.

It would be a sad day, of course, if Sen. Fulbright's criticism in the Senate led to a downturn in the shotgun and ammunition industries, especially in these days when it is deemed so necessary to

"stimulate the economy."

Many a State already has reduced the length of the hunting season to about 20 days and has drastically limited the number of ducks that can be killed. The limit has gradually gone from 25 a day to 15 to 8 and finally to two or three a day. There is a total ban on killing certain species of ducks.

But maybe there is a solution to all this which will, on the one hand, conserve wild life while, on the other, it will do no harm to the shotgun and ammunition industries or to rivalries in the field of sports. This writer, who once covered sports for a newspaper, saw Fred Gilbert, national champion, shoot down 496 flying discs out of 500, and it was more exciting than some sportsmen find their shooting to be in their long vigils in duck blinds. Besides, thousands of people have a chance to witness trap-shooting tournaments.

Senator Fulbright, as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, may not have realized it, but it is important not to create any new problems in international relations that might be "offensive" or "embarrassing" to heads of governments abroad. For, after all, Prime Minister Macmillan is a dedicated hunter of grouse and is said to be very expert with a shotgun. Then there's Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, who likes to hunt wild boar and occasionally crosses the Polish border to do so. This is only hearsay but maybe, in an era of "on-site inspections," all these earth-shaking reports will be duly verified, including the exact number of ducks a former President of the United States really disposed of in three hours while hunting in a foreign country.

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